

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 YAOUND 03580 291740Z

45

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 USIE-00 SY-10 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 L-03 TRSE-00 DRC-01

/056 W

----- 106853

P 291645Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1900

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE YAOUNDE 3580

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, CM, US

SUBJECT: ART OBJECT FROM LAIKOM

DEPT PASS USIA

FOR STATE AND USIA

REF: A) STATE 211840; B) YAOUNDE 3569 C) LAGOS 8628

D) STATE 170809

1. SUMMARY: RADIO CAMEROON HAS REPORTED NY TIMES ARTICLE ON STOLEN STATUE, BUT WITHOUT CRITICISM OF US. IT APPEARS STATUE STOLEN IN CONTEXT INTRA-TRIBAL. NY TIMES CORRESPONDENT NOW IN CAMEROON TO COVER STORY FROM THIS END. HE AND WE EXPLORING INTENTIONS MININFO AND CULTURE. OTHERWISE, BELIEVE PRIMARY CHANNEL FOR USG-GURC COLLABORATION IN POSSIBLY RETRIEVING STATUE FOR CAMEROON PROPERLY LIES AT WASHINGTON END AT PRESENT STAGE.

2. AFTER OCT 25 AND 26 NEWS ITEM BRIEFLY REPORTING NYT ARTICLE ON STOLEN STATUE, RADIO CAMEROON WEEKLY NEWS SUMMARY RAN SHORT COMMENTARY ON SUBJECT OCT 28 (REF B). MENTIONED THAT ACCORDING SOME SOURCES, STATUE STOLEN BY A PRINCE OF KOM PEOPLE, PASSED THROUGH SEVERAL HANDS BEFORE ENDING UP FOR SALE IN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 YAOUND 03580 291740Z

NY GALLERY. OTHERWISE THIS OCT 28 COMMENTARY MUSED

SOMEWHAT SARDONICALLY ABOUT TRADITION AND SACREDNESS, TALKED ABOUT MONEY VALUE OF STATUE, AND PROJECTED NO RPT NO RANCOR TOWARD USA. WRITER OF COMMENTARY MENTIONED TO POST I.O. OCT 29 THAT ACCORDING HIS SOURCES, K KOM PRINCE TOOK STATUE OUT TO NIGERIA, WHENCE IT WAS MOVED TO NIGER WHERE IT WAS SOLD TO A FRENCHMAN.

3. NYT CORRESPONDENT TOM JOHNSON ARRIVED YAOUNDE EVENING OCT 27 (REF C). WE HELPING HIM MAKE MININFO AND CULTURE CONTACTS (INTERRUPTED BECAUSE OF LOCAL HOLIDAY OCT 29). HE PLANNING TRAVEL TO KOM AREA (NORTHEAST OF BAMENDA IN NW PROVINCE) OCT 31.

4. AFTER RECEIVING REF D, EMBASSY TRIED TRACK DOWN THROUGH SECURITY AND POLICE CHANNELS WHERE GURC STOOD ON MATTER SINCE ORIGINAL PCV KINZELMAN LETTER--AND OUR SUBSEQUENT TALKS WITH KINZELMAN--HAD REFERRED TO SECURITY AND INTERPOL REPORTS. ALTHOUGH OUR EFFORTS HAD NOT BEEN AVAILING, WE HAD NOT CONSIDERED IT APPROPRIATE OR FRUITFUL AT THAT STAGE TO BROACH SUBJECT WITH EITHER FONMIN OR MININFO AND CULTURE.

5. AS ISSUE HAS EVOLVED, MININFO AND CULTURE IS NOW KEY INTERESTED AGENCY WITHIN GURC. APPARENTLY ITS INTEREST HAS BEEN ACTIVATED BY NYT ARTICLE. WE (AS WELL AS NYT CORRESPONDENT JOHNSON) WILL BE EXPLORING ITS INTENTIONS.

6. WE BELIEVE APPROPRIATE PRIMARY CHANNEL FOR USG-GURC COLLABORATION ON PROBLEM AT THIS POINT IS THROUGH CAMEROON EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON. WE PRESUME IT WILL BE APPRISING ITS FONMIN OF STATE OF PLAY AND ACTION NEEDED IF GURC WISHES PURSUE EFFORTS REGAIN STATUE FOR CAMEROON.

7 IN MOST RECENT CONVERSATION (AFTER NYT ARTICLE APPEARED), KINZELMAN TOLD DCM "IT HAS BEEN PROVED TO HIS SATISFACTION" THAT STATUE STOLEN AND THAT KOM PEOPLE WANT IT BACK. HE STATED THAT THE PERSON INSTRUMENTAL IN THE THEFT WHO NOFD "SEES ERROR OF HIS WAYS" WAS AN UNSUCCESSFUL ASPIRANT TO THRONE IN RIVALRY WITH CURRENT FON (CHIEF) AND IS STILL IN LINE OF SUCCESSION, AS FON'S NEPHEW. AS RESULT OF THESE INTRA-TRIBAL CONSIDERATIONS, KINZELMAN SAID CASE WAS NEVER BROUGHT TO COURT. (THIS APPARENTLY CONTRADICTS STATEMENT IN HIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 YAOUND 03580 291740Z

LETTER OF JUNE 25 TO KAREL MEYER THAT A SUSPECT WAS BROUGHT TO COURT AND ACQUITTED FOR LACK OF EVIDENCE.) KINZELMAN SUGGESTED AS IMAGINATIVE SOLUTION THAT FURMAN RETURN STATUE AS GIFT TO KOM PEOPLE, PERSONALLY BRINGING IT BACK AND OBTAINING RECOMPENSE FROM RESULTANT FAVORABLE PUBLICITY IN ART JOURNALS. ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE HE SUGGESTED IS POSSIBILITY OF RAISING SEVERAL THOUSAND DOLLARS FROM CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE 30,000 KOM PEOPLE TO PAY FURMAN AT LEAST PART OF HIS ACQUISITION COSTS.

WITH GURC OR USG PROVIDING TRANSPORT.

8. COMMENT: INTRA-TRIBAL RIVALRY ASPECT OF ALLEGED THEFT MIGHT  
POSSIBLY COMPLICATE GURC ABILITY OR EVEN WILL TO PURSUE  
MATTER TO CULMINATION. BUT ON BALANCE, GURC LIKELY WILL WANT  
--OR FEEL OBLIGED--TO MOVE TO GET STATUE BACK.  
MOORE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CULTURAL PROPERTY, NEWS MEDIA COMMENTS, THEFTS, TRIBALISM  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 29 OCT 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1973YAOUND03580  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** YAOUNDE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1973/newtext/t1973106/aaaaaeac.tel  
**Line Count:** 122  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** A) STATE 211840; B) YAOUNDE 3569 C), LAGOS 8628  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 11 JAN 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <11-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <31-Jan-2002 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ART OBJECT FROM LAIKOM DEPT PASS USIA  
**TAGS:** SCUL, CM, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005